RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 8 *July,* 2009/17 *Asadha,* 1931 *(Saka)*

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Upgradation of Sukhoi-30 MKI Aircrafts

*61. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Sukhoi-30 MKI of the Indian Air Force crashed in Jaisalmer killing a pilot who was reportedly not qualified to fly a Sukhoi;

(b) whether IAF has ordered a Court of Enquiry and detailed inspection of all fighters to rule out any fault;

(c) whether Government is planning to upgrade Sukhoi-30 MKI aircraft with latest avionics and weapons; and

(d) if so, the year-wise details of the number of aircrafts upgraded during the last five years indicating its cost after upgradation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) Sukhoi 30 MKI aircraft of Indian Air Force crashed near Jaisalmer on 30.4.2009 during a routine training flight. Both pilots ejected from the aircraft. However, the Flying Inspector, who was also a qualified pilot and was occupying the rear cockpit succumbed to fatal injuries.

A Court of Inquiry has been ordered into the accident. The proceedings of the Court of Inquiry are in progress.

Following the incident, the Indian Air Force has undertaken a detailed inspection of all Sukhoi 30 MKI fighter aircraft. Technical upgradation of aircraft of Indian Air Force is an ongoing process.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल : सभापति महोदय, जब कभी कोई सैनिक या फाइटर प्लेन का पायलट दुर्घटना में बेमौत मारा जाता है तो देश के दिल को दर्द होता है। महोदय, पहले मिग फाइटर प्लेंस में बहुत सारे पायलट्स दुर्घटनाओं में बेमौत मारे गए हैं, यह पहली दुर्घटना है जोकि सुखोई विमान में हुई है। मैंने माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछा था कि अखबारों में यह समाचार छपा है, कि "Wrong Pilot In Right Plane". उन्होंने इसका कोई संतोषजनक जवाब नहीं दिया। साथ ही अभी हमारे एयर मार्शल पी.वी. नाइक साहब ने एक comment किया है जिस पर मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का उत्तर चाहता हूं। उन्होंने comment किया था कि, 'Investigators were looking at possible faults in the flight control system of the fighter as well as problems in the rear ejection seat of the aircraft.'

सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी से हमारी चिंता इतनी है कि जैसे "मिग" विमान में दुर्घटनाओं के कारण मौतें हुई वैसे ही सुखोई विमानों में कोई बहुत बड़ा फाल्ट तो नहीं आ गया है जिस की वजह से इस विमान की

दुर्घटना हुई। हमारे फाइटर पायलट्स जिनकी ट्रेनिंग वगैरह पर करोड़ों रुपया खर्च होता है, उनकी इस तरह से दुर्घटनाओं में मौत नहीं होनी चाहिए। इसलिए मंत्री जी को इस बारे में उत्तर देना चाहिए कि नाइक साहब का comment कहां तक ठीक है?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, crash is a painful incident not only to the armed forces but to the entire country. Every time a crash happens, we institute a court of inquiry and we go into it in a very detailed manner. Now, the question pertains to the Sukhoi crash but the Member has asked about the MiG crashes. There was a phase where there were a series of MiG crashes. Subsequent to which a committee was formed and reasons were delved into, and the findings of the committee were tabled and a lot of rectification measures have been taken in order to make the MiG flying safer.

Today, every time a crash happens, the reasons for failure are delved into and, in this particular case, the court of inquiry is on and the reasons are being looked into.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल : सभापति महोदय, किसी भी फ्लाइट के एक्सीडेंट के पीछे जब जांच का सवाल आता है तो उसके तीन सिस्टम होते है - पहला फ्लाइट डैक में जो ब्लैक बॉक्स होता है, उसकी रिपोर्ट। आपने ब्लैक बॉक्स को फॉरेंसिक टेस्ट के लिए इंग्लैंड भेजा था, क्या उसकी रिपोर्ट आपके पास आ गई है? नंबर दो, पीछे की सीट के ऊपर जो "डाटा चिप" होती है, उस डाटा चिप को आपने रशिया भेजा है। क्या उसकी जांच रिपोर्ट आपके पास आई है और तीसरे अभी तक आपने जो जांच की है, उसकी रिपोर्ट क्यों नही आई क्योंकि यह रिपोर्ट एक महीने में आने वाली थी? मंत्री जी कृपया मेरे इन प्रश्नों का जवाब दें।

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, I admire the Member's diligence for going into a great detail. In this particular case, Sir, the black box has been badly damaged. There is only one company, based in the U.K., which is able to retrieve it in a partially damaged condition also, and we are talking to them; the black box has been sent there. If there is anything substantial – because it takes a lot of time; despite the damage, it takes a lot of time for them to retrieve the useful information. Once we find out what has happened, we will definitely do the rectification.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल : इतना समय तो नहीं लगना चाहिए अन्यथा फिर कोई दूसरा एक्सीडेंट हो सकता है।

श्री सभापति : देखिए अब आप सप्लीमेंटरी पर सप्लीमेंटरी मत पूछिए।

DR. N. JANARADHANA REDDY: Sir, Sukhoi is a recently procured aircraft from Russia. It has been tested on so many times. While procuring itself we could have noticed. The hon. Minister was saying that it is common for the aircraft to get crashed. If it is so, why should they go in for Russian aircraft? There were so many talks about purchase of this Russian aircraft, at that time also.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): Sir, Sukhoi fighter aircraft is one of the most advanced aircraft in the world and the Indian Air Force is very happy about that. The first lot of Sukhoi was procured in the year 1996. At the moment, Indian Air Force has got 98 Sukhois. Their plan is that by 2015, they must have a fleet of 230. So, from November 1996 onwards, this contract is there. So, it is not a new contract and the Air Force feels that this is the best as far as the Indian conditions are concerned. Regarding this kind of technicalities, we are not the experts; we have to

go by the technical advice of the Air Force. They are very happy with this Aircraft for the last four decades. The Indian Air Force is very happy with the Russian made fighter aircraft.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, I am coming to the particular aircraft which is said to have been crashed. Sir, before it took off whether, any precautions were taken to check up; whether it was in order, etc., etc. and after having been thoroughly checked up, it should have taken off. If that is the case, what could be the reason? The Minister may try to say that it is under investigation. I am trying to ask the informal information or informal source of information through which whether I can take it that it is a human failure or an equipment failure.

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, there are certain standard operating procedures that the pilot follows before takeoff. I am sure if anything is in disorder, he would abort the take-off. But in this case, once they are in flight, there is probability of malfunction in so many systems that happen; and in this case it is a fly-by-wire system and there is a possibility of malfunction happening in a number of places. So, till the court of inquiry is concluded, we will not be able to say what had definitely happened.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर : सभापति जी, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहती हूं कि जो दो पायलट बाहर आ गये, क्या उनकी स्टेटमेंट भी रिकार्ड की गई? यह प्लेन चलने के कितनी देर बाद दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुआ? क्या उन्होंने उसके बारे में कुछ बताया था कि इस प्लेन में प्रॉब्लम आ रही है? उनकी जो स्टेटमेंट है, उसमें यह पाया गया है? यह प्लेन क्यों दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुआ? आप इन्क्वायरी तो कर रहे हैं, लेकिन मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं कि क्या उन पायलट्स से भी पूछताछ की गई है?

SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU: Sir, I am sure the court of inquiry would have spoken to the pilots if they were in a conscious condition and the facts are ascertained. Till the court of inquiry is concluded, we cannot reveal any other thing.

Engaging private domestic airlines for moving paramilitary forces

*62. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:
SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal to provide air service for movement of paramilitary forces by engaging private domestic airlines;

(b) if so, the reasons for engaging private airlines instead of Air Force planes;

(c) whether engaging of private aircrafts to operate on border areas is a great security risk; and

(d) if so, whether Government would review its decision and, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) There is no proposal under consideration of Government for engaging private domestic airlines for moving paramilitary forces. However, there is a proposal of outsourcing of air courier services for airlifting of Central Paramilitary Forces (CPMFs) troops from J & K and North Eastern Sectors as a troop's welfare measure.